

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended)

A tube assembly for specimen analysis, comprising:

2           a tube having a pipette portion extending from a lower  
end portion thereof, said pipette portion having a passage  
4           therethrough, and

          a separator having an upper portion sealingly engaged in  
6   a lower portion of the tube, said ~~tube-~~ separator having a ~~reduced-~~  
lower portion of reduced cross-section defining a passage, whereby  
8   upon the filling of the tube to a predetermined level and the  
centrifuging thereof, centrifuged liquid passes through said  
10 separator passage to provide a specimen of predetermined volume  
defined below the separator and above a lower end of said reduced  
12 lower separator portion.

2. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 1, wherein:

2        said separator has a generally funnel configuration, and  
an air pocket is defined between the tube, the separator upper  
4        portion and an end of the reduced lower separator portion.

3. (currently amended)    A tube assembly according to  
2        Claim 2, wherein a predetermined volume of a specimen to be  
expressed is defined by said air pocket between a separator  
4        lower portion and said tube pipette portion.

4. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 3, wherein the  
2        predetermined volume of specimen comprises 0.1 ml.

## 5. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 1, wherein said  
2 separator is sealingly engaged by force-fitting thereof in a  
tapered portion of the tube.

## 6. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 1, wherein:

2 specimen liquid and sediment are automatically mixed  
during centrifuging by operation of the operator and an air  
4 pocket created thereby.

## 7. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 1, wherein said tube  
2 is tapered to narrow toward its lower portion and said separator  
is force-fitted in a lower portion of the tube.

## 8. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 1, wherein a bead  
2 is disposed about an upper open end of the tube for sealing  
engagement with a cap to close the tube.

## 9. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 1, wherein said tube  
2 pipette portion passage is tapered inwardly toward its opening.

10. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 1, and further  
2 comprising:

a plug for sealing engagement in said pipette passage,

4 said plug being disposed in a cup adapted to engage a lower  
portion of the tube when the plug is inserted in said pipette  
6 passage.

11. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 10, wherein:

2 upon removal of said plug from the pipette passage, a  
limited lowering of pressure within the tube tends to retain  
4 liquid from dropping through the pipette passage.

12. (currently amended)

A tube assembly for specimen analysis, comprising:

2 a tube having a pipette portion extending from a lower end  
portion thereof, said pipette portion having a passage therethrough,

4 a plug for sealing engagement in said pipette passage,

6 a cap for sealingly closing an upper open end portion of  
the tube, and

8 a separator having an upper portion sealingly engaged in  
the tube, said ~~tube~~ separator having a reduced lower portion  
defining a passage, whereby upon the filling of the tube to a  
10 predetermined level and the centrifuging thereof, centrifuged  
liquid passes through said separator passage to provide a specimen  
12 of predetermined volume defined ~~below-~~ between the separator and  
~~above-a-lower-end-of-the-reduced-lower-separator-portion-~~ lower  
14 portion and the tube pipette portion for expressing ~~thereof-~~  
of the specimen upon removal of said plug.

13. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 12, wherein:

2        said separator has a generally funnel configuration, and  
an air pocket is defined between the tube, the separator upper  
4        portion and an end of the reduced lower separator portion.

14. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 12, wherein said  
2        predetermined volume of specimen comprises 0.1 ml.

15. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 13, wherein:

2        specimen liquid and sediment are automatically mixed  
during centrifuging by operation of the separator and an air  
4        pocket created thereby.



## 16. (original)

2 A tube assembly according to Claim 12, wherein said tube is tapered to narrow toward its lower portion and said separator is force-fitted in a lower portion of the tube.

## 17. (original)

2 A tube assembly according to Claim 12, wherein a bead is disposed about an upper open end of the tube for sealing engagement with said cap.

## 18. (original)

2 A tube assembly according to Claim 12, wherein said plug is disposed in a cup adapted to engage a lower portion of the tube when the plug is inserted in said pipette passage.

19. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 18, wherein:

2           upon removal of said plug from the pipette passage, a  
limited lowering of pressure within the tube tends to retain  
4 liquid from dropping through the pipette passage.

20. (currently amended)

A tube assembly ~~according to claim 1, and further-~~  
2 for specimen analysis, comprising:

4 a tube having a pipette portion extending from a lower  
end portion thereof, said pipette portion having a passage  
therethrough,

6 a separator having an upper portion sealingly engaged in a  
lower portion of the tube, said separator having a lower portion  
8 of reduced cross-section defining a passage, whereby upon the  
filling of the tube to a predetermined level and the centrifuging  
10 thereof, centrifuged liquid passes through said separator passage  
to provide a specimen of predetermined volume defined below the  
12 separator and above a lower end of said reduced lower separator  
portion,

14 a plug adapted to seat about said pipette passage to seal  
the passage,

16 a spring disposed between the plug and the separator to urge  
the plug to close the pipette passage, and

18 a pin on said plug and extending through and outwardly from  
the pipette passage,

20 whereby a specimen is dispensed by urging said pin against  
a specimen holder to displace the plug against the urging of the  
22 spring.

## 21. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 20, wherein said  
2 spring is an helical tapered spring.

## 22. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 20, wherein said  
2 plug is of at least partially spherical configuration.

## 23. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 20, wherein said  
2 pin extends to an upper end of the pipette passage to facilitate  
passage of specimen through the passage.

24. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 1, wherein:

2        said separator has a lower portion of reduced diameter  
defining a passage therethrough, and

4        said separator is of generally hemispherical configuration  
to adapt the separator to receive a generally hemispherical probe  
6        of an apparatus for the drawing of specimen via a passage through  
the probe for automatic processing.

25. (original)

A tube assembly according to Claim 24, wherein:

2        an upper edge portion of said generally hemispherical  
separator is tapered to a reduced thin edge portion to engage an  
4        inner wall of the tube to prevent specimen sediment from entering  
between the separator and the tube wall.